7: Mikesell K-4,5 (1956-1957) 1961 MX3 Rif MX3

105 Many of the basic distinctions in the cultural geography of northern Morocco can be attributed to two main factors: the sense of collective identity that is felt by members of tribal confederations and some individual tribes, and the extent to which such groups have been exposed to alien influence. For example, Berber speech in the Rif has survived because it is an expression of fraternal unity, and because the traditions of political independence and economic self-sufficiency have enforced the isolation of the area from the main centers of Arab influence. [186] Moreover, the preservation of Berber speech and many other aspects of Berber culture have been encouraged by the contempt of the Rifians for their Arab or [176 178] Arabized neighbors. In the Rif, as elsewhere, an innovation may be accepted or rejected, not on the basis of its form and content or its compatibility with established custom but because of its affiliation with desirable or undesirable groups.

Consciously or unconsciously, tribal groups have selected material traits, such as distinctive clothing, settlement patterns, and types of houses, to serve as symbols of their identity. It is not by accident that the western limits of dispersed settlement and flat-roofed houses nearly coincide with the western limits of Rifian speech. Nor is it surprising that symbols of tribal identity are more conspicuous in the highlands than on the Atlantic littoral. This contrast is explained, or at least clarified, when the distribution of culture traits is compared with the physical division between refuge areas and passageways.

Other notable examples of refuge areas are found on the Ghmaran coast, especially the territory of the Bani Bu Zra, and in the less accessible parts of Sanhaja as-Srair. The most exposed areas of northern Morocco are the Fahs territory, south of Tangier, and the basin of Wad Lukkus. These territories are cultural melting pots in which heterogenous elements have been blended by the pervasive force of Islam. Moreover, these territories, unlike the rest of the northern zone, have been affected by social and economic influences emanating from towns.

For northern Morocco as a whole, subsistence farming is clearly the predominant mode of livelihood. With the exception of hemp, grown in the Sanhajan highlands, there is no large cash crop. At most markets barter is more important than cash transactions, and the essential imports from the urban centers are limited to sugar, salt, tea, and kerosene. Yet the rural economy of northern Morocco should not be described as one of simple subsistence with little or no specialization or exchange. In northern Morocco, as in many other areas of the non-Western world, self-sufficiency at the scale of the canton or tribe reflects the specialized or semispecialized production of individual hamlets and farmsteads.

The basic differences within the agricultural framework depend upon the opportunities for cultivation of crops to supplement the staple cereals. Maximum opportunity is found in the Sanhajan highlands, where perennial streams provide water for irrigation of vegetables and legumes. There are few perennial streams in the western lowlands, but the combination of gentle slopes, fertile soils, and dependable rains minimizes the risks of dry farming and makes possible a surplus yield of grain to be drawn upon during unproductive months. In the Rif, horticulture provides a safeguard against failure of the cereal crops, and when bread is scarce, raisins, nuts, and figs are staple foods. The number of orchards decreases